ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A message processing apparatus which handles messages exchanged over a network and explicitly notifies the recipient of the importance and other information regarding each received message. Incoming messages are received by a receiver employed in the apparatus. Those messages may contain some key information as part of their attribute data, which specifies a handler program relevant to them. A key information extraction unit extracts the key information from each received message. Consulting a table that defines the relationships between handler programs and various key information, a program loading unit then loads a specific handler program relevant to the extracted key information. The recipient may cause an event related to the received message. Depending on what kind of event it is, an execution unit chooses and executes an appropriate primitive process provided as part of the handler program. When, for example, the recipient attempts to delete an unopened message, the apparatus will warn him/her by displaying a warning message on a monitor screen.